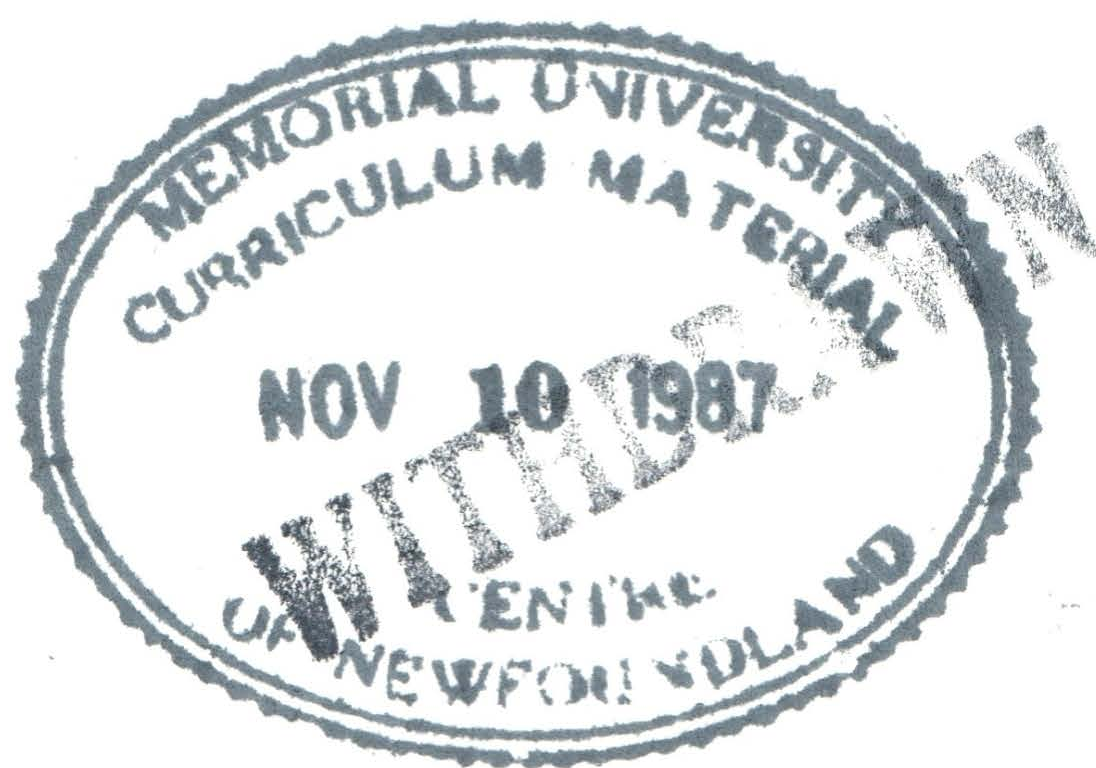


RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SYLLABUS FOR INTEGRATED SCHOOLS



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SYLLABUS FOR INTEGRATED SCHOOLS OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR



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PREFACE

Since its formation in 1969 many developments have occurred in the Integrated Education System, particularly in the provision of religious education programs. While many statements of philosophy and policy have been developed, bulletins, memos, and other documents have been disseminated, effective communication about the system and the religious education programs offered has been hampered by our not having available a single source providing basic information. This document represents our attempt to respond to this need by providing simply and briefly information regarding the background, philosophy, and programs in religious education offered through the Integrated Education System.

SHERMAN J. STRYDE
EXECUTIVE OFFICER
INTEGRATED EDUCATION COUNCIL

January, 1987

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

As in the other provinces of Canada, education in Newfoundland is a provincial responsibility. Term 17 of the Terms of Union of Newfoundland with Canada (1949) gives to the Provincial Legislature exclusive right to make laws in relation to education. However, protection is provided for the rights and privileges of the religious denominations operating schools at the time of Union. In Newfoundland these rights and privileges were extensive, and in this regard, Newfoundland is somewhat unique among the Canadian provinces.

Historically, schools were started by churches or by various religious societies inspired by churches. The first school is reputed to have been started at Bonavista in 1722 or 1723 by an Anglican clergyman, possibly with the support of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. Other societies inspired by or later associated with churches played a significant role in the provision of educational services. These included The Society for Improving the Conditions of the Poor in St. John's, The Benevolent Irish Society, and The Newfoundland School Society. Initially, these societies tended to function as non-denominational or interdenominational but for a variety of reasons eventually became identified with a particular denomination. The early efforts of government to support and regulate education were along non-sectarian lines but here, too, the denominational character soon manifested itself. In part this may have resulted from lack of agreement among the denominational groups (especially between Roman Catholic and Protestant groups but later among the various Protestant denominations), but there were other factors which were influential as well. The pattern of settlement in Newfoundland was often homogeneous by denomination so that schooling would be denominational in fact if not by design. Furthermore, with very limited financial resources, the government would find it difficult to raise sufficient funds to maintain educational services without the subsidization of the churches, some of which had support from overseas. It should not be surprising, therefore, that education in this Province developed along such strong denominational lines and the preservation of that character was an issue in the negotiation of the Terms of Union of Newfoundland with Canada.

As previously mentioned, Term 17 of these Terms of Union gives to the Legislature of the Province exclusive authority to make laws in relation to

education, but such laws must respect the rights and privileges enjoyed by denominations at the time of Union. Furthermore, public funds provided for education must be shared among the denominations on a non-discriminatory basis. In 1949, there were seven denominations which were so recognized — Anglican, Moravian, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Salvation Army, Seventh-Day Adventist, and United Church — although the Presbyterian Church did not actually operate its own schools. In 1954, similar recognition was accorded to the Pentecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland.

Following Confederation in 1949, tremendous growth was experienced in many aspects of education in the Province. Largely in response to this growth, in 1964 the government of the day established a Royal Commission to make a careful study of all aspects of education in Newfoundland and to make recommendations regarding change. As a result of the discussions which were substantially prompted by the work of this Commission, two major developments occurred which have been very significant for the denominational system of education. Through a process of discussion and negotiation the major churches involved in education agreed to withdraw from direct involvement in the Department of Education and carry out their mandate through agencies established outside the Department of Education structure. These agencies are the Denominational Education Councils which were given legislated functions to perform in such areas as developing and implementing religious education programs, allocation of capital grants to school boards, initial certification of teachers, and in several other areas. Each of the five denominations which had a superintendent of education resident in the Department of Education could establish a Denominational Education Council. The Pentecostal and Roman Catholic denominations did avail of this provision and set up separate councils. However, concurrent with this move to provide for Denominational Councils, a second major development was taking place. The Anglican Church, The Salvation Army, and the United Church were engaged in discussions which resulted in an agreement to provide jointly the educational services which they had previously provided independently. They agreed to form a single system to be known as the Integrated Education System with its own Denominational Council. Subsequently, the Presbyterian Church and the Moravian Church became part of this integration. As a consequence of this development, the Integrated Education System is currently providing educational services to more than half the student population of the Province.

THE INTEGRATED EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Integrated Education System is an ecumenical endeavour of five denominations (Anglican, Moravian, Presbyterian, Salvation Army, United Church) in the governance and operation of school districts directed at achieving the “Aims of Public Education for Newfoundland and Labrador.” These aims are intended to promote the four-fold development of youth — intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual.

With respect to intellectual, physical, and social development, the Integrated System does not differ markedly from other systems. As for spiritual development, however, the System employs a non-confessional, divergent approach aimed at providing for and encouraging young people to come to their own decisions on spiritual and moral commitments. This approach focuses on enabling students to understand the nature of religion and its influence in society, helping them to clarify their thinking on various fundamental questions and helping them to develop an approach to life based on Christian principles. It is expected that this will be accomplished not only through the religious education programs prescribed for the schools but also through a variety of other activities intended to influence the overall atmosphere of the school.

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Early in the discussions which led up to Integration, the leaders of the Churches involved recognized that agreement on a common religious education program was essential. In 1967 a committee of three was established to study the issue, identify potential materials, oversee the piloting of these materials, and make recommendations for the implementation of a religious education program. Out of this emerged two basic conclusions regarding the orientation for religious education which should be followed:

- an open approach should be adopted in teaching the program;
- no single doctrinal position should be espoused and advanced.

While the philosophy of religious education has undergone elaboration and refinement since these early days, the basic orientation has not changed.

The current philosophy of religious education for the Integrated Education System derives from the broad philosophy of education found in the document “Aims of Public Education for Newfoundland and Labrador.” In this document considerable attention is given to the belief that education should seek to develop the spiritual/moral dimension of the individual as well as the emotional, intellectual, social, and physical dimensions. Furthermore, it is contended that the best and fullest development of the individual can be achieved in a Christian democratic society and that the aims of education must be conceived in harmony with such a belief.

There are five basic principles which give direction to the type of religious education program developed for use in our schools:

1. The program must be justifiable on educational grounds. Our rationale for religious education includes such justification as the following:
 - a. Our society and culture have been profoundly influenced by religion, particularly in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. An understanding of religion can contribute significantly to a greater understanding of the functioning of people in our own and in other societies and of the values to which they subscribe.
 - b. Religious beliefs form an important part of the basis for moral values and ethical conduct.
 - c. All individuals have a need to find meaning in life and to satisfy themselves regarding the ultimate issues of life. Religion and religious expression are one way of interpreting and responding to human experience and of attempting to find meaning regarding these ultimate issues.
2. Account must be taken of the nature of the student at various stages of development. Relevant features of this would be an acknowledgement that students, as all other individuals, are engaged in a search for meaning and purpose in life; that at different stages of development they respond in various ways to this search; and that the search concerns itself primarily with fundamental questions about themselves and their relationship to other people, to the universe, and to a transcendent order.

3. There exists an extensive and diverse body of content which is appropriate for use in religious education. While biblical studies are foundational, a wide variety of content from many fields has potential for use.
4. Recognition must be given to the social, religious, and educational context in which the program is to be delivered. While our society is predominantly Christian, it is becoming more pluralistic in faith expressions. Furthermore, the Integrated Education System is a cooperative endeavor of five Christian denominations. The religious education program must provide for the exploration of fundamental issues in such a way as to complement the endeavors of these sponsoring denominations and at the same time be sensitive to other faith expressions.
5. The approach adopted in the development and delivery of religious education programs should be a non-confessional, divergent approach. The object of this approach is not to persuade students to adopt a particular confessional stance, but rather, to encourage and facilitate their arriving at their own decisions on religious and moral commitment which will be genuine because they are personal and not imposed. While such an approach might have been encouraged by the pluralistic nature of our system, an even stronger basis for it can be found in its compatability with the best in our Christian tradition and with sound educational practice.

Consistent with these basic principles, the Integrated Education System seeks to promote the pursuit of the following aims for religious education in our schools:

- *1. To enable students to understand what religion, and in particular, Christianity, has contributed to our total way of life in the Western World.
2. To assist students in their understanding of what constitutes belief, what people believe, and how their beliefs determine their behavior and/or otherwise influence their lives.
- *3. To help students clarify their thinking on some of the fundamental questions about themselves and their relationship to other people, to the universe, and to a transcendent order.
4. To help students develop for themselves an approach to life based on Christian principles.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Integrated Education Council has adopted the following policy regarding the participation of students in religious education. The relevant section of the Schools Act to which reference is made is Section 64 which states that: “No person shall, in any college or school aided by money granted under this Act, impart to any child attending it any religious instruction which may be objected to, in writing, by the parent or guardian of that child.”

Kindergarten to Grade Nine

Subject to the provisions of the Schools Act, R.S.N. 1970, Integrated School Boards shall require all students in Integrated Schools to enroll each year in the religious education course prescribed.

Senior High School

Subject to the provisions of the Schools Act, R.S.N. 1970, students in Integrated Schools shall be required to enroll in a minimum of three one-credit courses in religious education, one of which shall be Religious Education 1100. It would be preferable to enroll in at least one course in each level of the three levels of the reorganized high school program.

Procedure

All objections from parents as provided for in the Schools Act should be received by the district superintendent.

OVERVIEW OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Throughout the religious education program used in our schools attention is given to the development of attitudes, the acquisition of knowledge of relevant content, and the application of this knowledge to life situations. However, at each of the various levels of schooling the primary orientation of the program is to give emphasis to one of these more than to the others. At the primary/lower elementary level the major emphasis is on attitude development — attitudes of young people to themselves, to others, to God, to Christian service and stewardship, and to the created order. At the upper elementary levels and into the junior high school level emphasis is given to acquiring knowledge of basic biblical content and of the nature of religious beliefs. Also, at the junior high level and into the beginning of senior high the focus is on the application of religious knowledge to the development of various expressions of religious faith and to contemporary moral and social issues. In Levels 2 and 3 of the senior high school students are provided opportunity to pursue specialized study in either world religions or biblical studies. This pattern of program organization is illustrated in the diagram following.

PRIMARY PROGRAM — KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE THREE

Aims of Primary Religious Education

We believe that the overall goal of religious education at the primary level is to provide a basis on which subsequent learning can be developed; that the development of positive attitudes towards religious education is crucial to this subsequent development; that appropriate ideas and concepts are those which are familiar to the child or to which he/she can relate; and that such relevant ideas and concepts at this age are likely to be those associated with the horizontal dimension of religion — understanding of self and one's relationship to other people. Therefore, the basic aims of religious education for the primary grades are to:

1. Create a favorable attitude towards religion and religious education;
2. Help children to see that religion is related to everyday living.

General Objectives for Kindergarten to Grade Three

1. To help the child have some appreciation and understanding of the moral-ethical (horizontal) dimension of religion as applied to his/her own life;
2. To help the child realize the significance and importance of human relationships;
3. To introduce the child to biblical and religious characters through stories that reinforce the ideas in Objectives 1 and 2;
4. To introduce the child to some attributes the Christian associates with God such as loving, forgiving, caring, all-knowing;
5. To introduce the child to special seasons and events that are celebrated by religious people in the Christian tradition;
6. To introduce the child to the idea that helping others is a Christian response to the physical and social order of the world.

Program Resources

For each of Kindergarten, Grade One, and Grade Two a curriculum and resource guide has been prepared which provides teachers with themes to be developed, specific objectives to be achieved, and suggestions regarding appropriate resources and evaluation strategies. A basic resource for developing the horizontal dimension of religion is the DUSO I kit (the title being an acronym for “Developing Understanding of Self and Others”). The Arch Book series of Bible stories is a major resource appropriate for developing the vertical dimension of religion — understanding of and relationship to God. However, the program is not limited to these resources. A vast array of other appropriate resources is recommended.

The Grade Three program focuses primarily on exploring the issue of Christian service.

Kindergarten: Integrated Education Council, Religious Education Integrated: Kindergarten Curriculum and Resource Guide. Toronto: Nelson Canada, 1984.

DUSO I (Revised) — Developing Understanding of Self and Others. Circle Pines, Minnesota: American Guidance Service, 1982.

Grade One: Integrated Education Council, Religious Education Integrated: Grade One Curriculum and Resource Guide. Toronto: Nelson Canada, 1984.

DUSO I (Revised) — Developing Understanding of Self and Others. Circle Pines, Minnesota: American Guidance Service, 1982.

Grade Two: Integrated Education Council, Religious Education Integrated: Grade Two Curriculum and Resource Guide. Toronto: Nelson Canada, 1984.

DUSO I (Revised) — Developing Understanding of Self and Others. Circle Pines, Minnesota: American Guidance Service, 1982.

Walters, Julie and Don Swift, Forgiving One Another. Notre Dame, Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 1979.

Grade Three: Student Textbook: Vaught, Bonnie. Chosen to Serve. Philadelphia: Lutheran Church Press, 1964.

Teacher Guidebook

GRADE FOUR

General Objectives

To help students understand and appreciate:

1. How religion in its different expressions (Bible, prayers, hymns, service) responds to the wonder and mystery we experience in our world;
- * 2. That religion and science are not opposed to each other but rather are different yet complementary expressions of man's search for understanding and meaning;
3. That science, far from undercutting religion, serves to increase religious awe and praise by uncovering more of nature's wonder;
4. That nature is not something which science can completely conquer and control but something wonderful and complex which science must attempt to understand, respect, and cooperate with;
5. That the world is orderly, both physically and socially; therefore, we should live in community with the world and the people in it.

Program Resources

Student Textbook: Schlenker, Elizabeth D. God's Ways in His World.
Canadian Edition. Toronto: Nelson Canada, 1985.

Teacher Guidebook

GRADES FIVE AND SIX

General Objectives

1. To give students firsthand knowledge of the Bible;
2. To give students some understanding of the chronology of the biblical story;
3. To dissipate as far as possible some of the root causes for misunderstanding the Bible;
4. To help students recognize that the Bible is not necessarily in contradiction to what science is saying about the universe but rather the two may be seen as being complementary;
5. To help students explore the cultural milieus which various parts of the Bible reflect thereby increasing an understanding of the Bible's language and thought forms;
6. To give students some understanding of how the main biblical story has been recorded;
7. To help students understand how the events and experiences recorded in the Bible can have ongoing relevance to those who read them today.

Program Resources

Grade Five: Student Textbook: Wincke, Gustav K. and Doris J. Bible People and Bible Times: Old Testament. Canadian Edition. Toronto: Nelson Canada, 1985.

Teacher Guidebook

Grade Six: Student Textbook: Wincke, Gustav K. and Doris J. Bible People and Bible Times: New Testament. Canadian Edition. Toronto: Nelson Canada, 1985.

Teacher Guidebook

GRADE SEVEN

General Objectives

To help students understand:

1. The important part that religion has played in humankind's development;
2. That from the beginning people sensed a power beyond themselves which elicited varying responses including fear of the "unknown other" and/or a sense of awe and wonder;
3. That in response to physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual stimuli, humankind became involved in a variety of religious expressions;
4. That for Christians full revelation came through Jesus who showed what God expects of humankind and who makes it possible for all people, through him, to approach God without fear;
5. That how we organize ourselves and treat one another within families, communities, and society is a reflection of our religious faith.

Program Resources

Student Textbook: Domján, O.V., B. Wigley and R. Pitcher. From Fear to Faith. Canadian Edition. Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Canada, 1986.

Teacher Guidebook

GRADE EIGHT

General Objectives

1. To introduce students to the major religions of the world;
2. To examine the beliefs and practices of these world religions;
3. To stimulate the imagination of students to appreciate the meaning which particular religious phenomena and practices have for those who adopt various faiths;
4. To deal with the story of religion as a living force among many people;
5. To consider other world religions in relationship to Christianity.

Program Resources

Student Textbook: Wigley, B. and R. Pitcher. Paths to Faith. London: Longman, 1970.

Teacher Guidebook

GRADE NINE

General Objectives

1. To help students understand the origin, background and history of Christianity;
2. To assist young people to explore their questions about the similarities and differences between denominations represented by them, their friends, and neighbours;
3. To encourage in young people a sense of understanding and respect for various denominations and for differing religious viewpoints;
4. To enlarge the students' understanding and appreciation of the significant contribution of each denomination to the spiritual, cultural, and material development of the community in this country and throughout the world.

Program Resources

Student Textbook: Hodder, Morley F. Our Christian Heritage. Toronto: Nelson Canada, 1983.

Teacher Guidebook

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL — LEVEL 1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 1100 — DIMENSIONS OF RELIGION

General Objectives

To assist students to:

1. Look at the nature of religion, education, religious education, and the influences of these on the individual;
2. Discuss values and examine moral issues to aid them in making wise decisions and discriminating choices;
3. Have a better understanding of themselves and to see the need for good communication between people;
4. Look at the nature of the family (past, present, and future) and to examine our alternate life styles;
5. See that religion and science look at the world in different ways. Science is concerned with what the world consists of, how it operates, and how it can be measured, while religion looks at why things are here, their purpose, and their value.

Program Resources

Student Textbook: Randell, Murray and Ross Reccord (eds.). The Dimensions of Religion. Revised Edition. Toronto: Nelson Canada, 1979.

Teacher Guidebook

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL — LEVEL 2

At Levels 2 and 3 of the senior high school provision is made for students to pursue the study of either world religions or biblical studies. While there is some sequencing intended, depending on school scheduling, it is possible for students to study world religions in one year and biblical studies in another or to study both concurrently.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 2100 — PRIMITIVE AND EASTERN RELIGIONS

General Objectives

1. To help students understand the nature of religion and the part it plays in the social, historical, moral, and legal development of all people;
2. To help students develop an open and understanding attitude towards the religious beliefs and practices of other people;
3. To introduce students to the origins, development, sacred writings, basic concepts, rites and practices of the major religions of the Eastern World — Hinduism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shintoism, and Buddhism — and the part they play in today's world.

Program Resources

Student Textbook: Evans, A.S., R.E. Moynes and L. Martinello. What People Believe: A Study of the World's Great Faiths. Volume One. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1983.

Teacher Guidebook

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 2109 — A SURVEY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

General Objectives

To help students:

1. Know the origin, make-up, and theological focus of the Old Testament;

2. Develop an awareness of different approaches to interpretation of the Bible;
3. Know the principal narratives and personalities of the Bible in their historical, social, and cultural setting;
4. Understand the thought and feel the beauty and spiritual inspiration of the biblical masterpieces;
5. Gain an appreciation of how biblical experiences have meaning for us today;
6. Be aware of the influence of the Old Testament on the events and ideas of the New Testament;

Program Resources

Student Textbook: Corston, John B. Journey Under God: A Student Guide to the Old Testament. St. John's: Breakwater Books, 1986.

Teacher Guidebook

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL — LEVEL 3

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 3100 — WESTERN RELIGIONS

General Objectives

1. To help students understand the nature of religion and the part it plays in the social, historical, moral, and legal development of all people;
2. To help students develop an open and understanding attitude towards the religious beliefs and practices of other people;
3. To introduce students to the origins, development, sacred writings, basic concepts, rites and practices of the major religions of the Western World — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — and the part they play in today's world.

Program Resources

Student Textbook: Evans, A.S., R.E. Moynes, and L. Martinello. What People Believe: A Study of the World's Great Faiths. Volume Two. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1983.

Teacher Guidebook

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 3109 — THE LIFE OF JESUS AND THE EARLY CHURCH

General Objectives

1. To introduce students to the literature of the New Testament with particular reference to the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles;
2. To introduce students to the cultural, historical, and political milieu from which Christianity arose;
3. To help students understand and appreciate the life and ministry of Jesus as seen through the eyes of one of the gospel writers;
4. To enable students to gain some insight into the resurrection story and its impact on the early church and to trace the witness of some of the disciples and apostles in the post-resurrection era;



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tionary impact of the resurrection on the Apostle Paul and his resultant ministry in the early church.

Program Resources

Student Textbook: Corston, John B. A Doctor Remembers: The Good News According to St. Luke. Toronto: Nelson Canada, 1986.

Teacher Guidebook

CONCLUSION

The challenge in religious education is an exciting one filled with many possibilities for exercising a positive influence on the full development of young people. Our response to this challenge is threefold:

- to provide the best curricula materials possible;
- to encourage a positive attitude on the part of teachers;
- to allow students opportunity to arrive at their own decisions on religious and moral issues.

What has been presented here is a brief description of the context within which our program of religious education functions, the basic philosophy of the program, the overall nature of the program, and some details regarding the programs offered for various levels of the school system.

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AUG 12 1997

DATE DUE SEP 29 1997

NOV 26 1987

AUG 27 1988

SEP 25 1988

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JAN 22 1988

FEB 12 1997

FEB 10 1997

FEB 26 1997
MAR 07 1997

MAR 21 1997

MAY 23 1998

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JUL 24 1998

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SEP 19 1996

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